

# *Nothing can stop the growth of Bitcoin Depot in California. Not a pandemic. Or the volatile swings in cryptocurrency.*

**A** global pandemic and volatile swings in cryptocurrency trading hasn't slowed the growth of Bitcoin Depot® in California.

The Atlanta-based company installed 200 of its bitcoin ATMs last year in the Golden State, staking its claim as the largest state operator in the growing segment.

“We’re not clustered in just one area, like downtown for example,” founder Brandon Mintz explains. “We’re going all the way to the outskirts to ensure customers have easy and convenient access to a Bitcoin Depot BTM™.”

The expansion map includes Indio in the Coachella Valley; Lancaster in the High Desert region of Antelope Valley in the western Mohave Desert; and Oxnard, an agricultural community in coastal Ventura County.

More than 13 million Los Angeles metro residents and workers are within a 10- to 15-minute drive of one of the company’s bitcoin ATM machines.

The Southland is by far the company’s most concentrated area in California, followed by the state’s tech center in San Francisco and the biotech and communications hub of San Diego.

Bitcoin Depot®, which entered the new year with ATMs installed in 40 states, plans to close the gap this year.

“We’re trying to go into every single state in the country, with the goal of having a Bitcoin ATM on every corner,” Mintz says.

## ***The Remote Workforce***

The national expansion plan has boosted hiring



*Bitcoin Depot CEO Brandon Mintz*

throughout the company. Bitcoin Depot® added more than 50 workers last year, bolstering its compliance, accounting, sales, and operations divisions. It now employs about 80, with roughly a third based in the Atlanta area.

“We’ve completely embraced the remote work ethic amid the pandemic and have since been awarded as one of the best companies to work for according to Great Place to Work,” Mintz says. “Thanks to great software and products, we’ve been able to adapt to a new normal as a team and continue to work together seamlessly.”

The hiring includes executives from traditional financial services firms and the ATM segment. The firm has placed a significant focus on compliance as regulators require an AML compliance

program to operate this type of business.

Mintz's game plan hasn't changed since the California Business Journal caught up with the entrepreneur in August 2019. The company still targets bitcoin machine installs at businesses with ample parking, long operating hours and those with ATMs. However, Bitcoin Depot® now offers the ability for its customers to buy bitcoin online through credit card, debit card and wire transfer.

A survey by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. estimates that 25% of U.S. households are unbanked or underbanked — lacking a bank account outright or forced to use alternative financial services such as payday loans, money orders, and check cashers.

The majority of customers use Bitcoin Depot® ATMs to fund their bitcoin wallet to become self-banked, with the ability to complete online purchases and transfer funds from their mobile phones, eliminating the need for old school providers such as Western Union, as well as money orders and check cashers.

### *The Cryptocurrency Coaster*

Bitcoin, the most well-known decentralized cryptocurrency in the world, is on another wild ride.

Traders in mid-January initiated a massive market correction, erasing more than \$200 billion in market cap in 24 hours, as the currency (BTC-USD) shed more than \$10,000 in share price.

It is trading around \$37,500 as of press time, down 10.4% from its 52-week high of \$41,946.74 on Jan. 8. Its 52-week low was \$4,106.98 in May.

When Mintz installed his first four bitcoin ATMs in 2016, bitcoin was trading between \$625 and \$675. It closed last week with a market cap of \$696 billion, a six-fold increase since his first install.

Despite the trading turbulence and growing concerns from global regulators, Mintz remains bull-



ish as some institutional investors and other bitcoin owners view the currency as a hedge against the potential devaluing of fiat, or government-issued currencies, such as the U.S. dollar.

Mintz says that the U.S. last year printed more than 20 percent of the nation's total paper currency in its history.

"Inflation is a real concern and it's driving a lot of people to crypto as a hedge against that," he says.

Industry growth and bitcoin adoption has helped Bitcoin Depot® hit a major milestone. Mintz in late 2019 projected the company would expand its ATM footprint to more than 1,000 locations by the end of 2020.

"I'm very happy to say that we've surpassed that," he says. "We hit nearly 1,500 machines by the end of 2020 and passed our goal by about 50%. We're hopeful to see a similar outcome this year with our goal of 5,000 locations." — By Chris Casacchia, California Business Journal

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